

SECRET

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
Washington, D. C.

12
No Date
BOSTON SERIES

Original in
RS/Archives

Special Reports
Box 800 -
X1221

GERMAN REPORT ON ALLEGED GERMAN AND ALLIED
NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SWISS ARMY

During the fourth week in September 1943 Köcher, German Minister in Bern, is said to have stated that in his opinion the report of the supposedly reliable agent which had been communicated to the Navy High Command and according to which British and American representatives had conferred with General Guisan concerning the right of way through Switzerland was not correct. To begin with, a successful landing in Northern Italy or on the Mediterranean coast between San Remo and Spezia would cause the enemy to cross the Saint Bernard and the Simplon Passes instead of attempting an invasion via the mountain passes of the St. Gotthardt, Maloja and Bernina, which Köcher included among the eastern Swiss mountain passes. Only the Gotthardt and the Simplon had efficient railroads. The line crossing the Bernina pass was a single gauge tourist railroad and was merely the connecting link between the Veltline and the Engadine.

For reasons which Köcher had repeatedly expounded he did not believe that Switzerland would put up merely a sham fight against British and American invaders. Switzerland's neutrality policy, which was axiomatic with the Swiss, did not permit such dishonest procedure. The large majority of the Swiss people were aware of the fact that a surrender of their neutrality after a sham fight would mean the end of their existence as an independent nation, regardless of who was victor among the Allies.

In Köcher's opinion it was not correct to imply that according to Swiss opinion Germany was no longer strong enough to invade Switzerland as a preventive measure and to occupy her mountain passes. Despite temporary setbacks the respect for the continued efficiency of the German Wehrmacht was still so deep that the Swiss were well aware of the riskiness of the political game with which they were credited by this supposedly reliable agent of the Wehrmacht High Command. Köcher supposed that the agent's report resulted indirectly from a statement by the social democratic National Councillor, Graber, to the effect that he placed the freedom of the world over and above his country's independence. Swiss public opinion had branded this statement severely. The whole nation had protested against this utterance, which would entail disciplinary action for the National Councillor.

- * Received "V-Mann" - Vertrauensmann (T)
- ** Commander in Chief of Swiss Army

Special Reports
Box 800 -
X1221

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act
DATE 2001 2006

SECRET

- 2 -

Köcher had called on the Swiss Foreign Minister, Federal Councillor Pilet-Golaz, and had questioned him concerning rumored negotiations of British and American representatives with General Guisan. The Federal Councillor had referred with great emphasis to the various official statements on Swiss neutrality issued up to a few days previously. He had said that Germany might rest assured that Switzerland would also fight an Allied invasion to the utmost and with weapon in hand. The Federal Councillor, who had become very excited, dropped the remark that the rumors mentioned by Köcher had resulted from discussions early in March of that year between General Guisan and SS-Brigadeführer Schellenberg. As a result the Germans had assumed that similar discussions were being carried on with the opposition party. When Köcher had pressed the Federal Councillor for information on the talks between Schellenberg and Guisan, he had avoided giving a clear answer. Therefore Köcher suggested that Brigadeführer Schellenberg be officially interrogated, concerning his interview with the Swiss Army Command and that Köcher be informed of the results. The interview in question had been mentioned by the Swiss Foreign Minister in the course of an official conference with Köcher and it was therefore of political significance, the meaning of which must be communicated to Köcher if he was to deal with the matter in a responsible manner.

Köcher concluded his remarks with the statement that history knew of no broken political pledge on the part of Switzerland. The Swiss had always redeemed their pledges even if this involved them in a hopeless situation. In Köcher's opinion she would stand by her word even if the British and Americans should attack her southern Alpine front.

Obergruppenführer Dr. Kaltenbrunner reported to Köcher as follows:

On Sunday 29 August retired Swiss Major Ernst Leonhardt** had communicated the following: The Swiss Minister in the United States, Bruggmann, had arrived in the National Assembly a few days ago with a message from the President of the United States....** Roosevelt requested the Swiss Federal Council to make Swiss airdromes available for military action against the Germans.

The reaction of the Swiss Government was to officially maintain an attitude of neutrality. Parallel with this order General Guisan had convened all higher army leaders. He said that the situation was serious.

- * As of May 1944 listed as SS Oberführer and Head of a Department of the Security Police
- ** Leonhardt has since been deprived of his Swiss citizenship and was sentenced to death in Switzerland.
- *** Text illegible

SECRET

SECRET

- 3 -

Kaltenbrunner added to this report that on 22 September a Swiss First Lieutenant under orders from Senner had arrived by plane in Berlin to tell SS Oberführer Schellenberg that the United States was bringing heavy pressure on Switzerland and that the United States wanted Swiss airdromes. This had placed General Guisan in a very difficult position which he would counter by delaying maneuvers. Senner had emphasized the seriousness of the situation and would contact Schellenberg again within the next two weeks.

Kaltenbrunner stated that the Reich Foreign Minister requested that the Germans make their standpoint clear without inquiring further into the matter.

* Unidentified

"SENNER" was Schellenberg's code name for
MASSON. C/S

9 November 1966

SECRET